

### Remarks

Claims 6, 55, and 56 have been amended to more precisely claim the present invention. Claims 1 and 2 were previously canceled. Claims 3 – 5, 32 – 54, and 57 – 61 were previously withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement by the Examiner. Claims 6 – 31, 55 and 56 remain pending in the application.

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the January 30, 2006 teleconference in which the Lehmann and Galton references were discussed with respect to claim 6.

### 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejected claims 6-8, 10-16, 18, 21, 23-31 and 55-56 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lehmann et al EP 167999 A2 (hereinafter "Lehmann"). The Applicant previously provided an English language translation of portions of the Lehmann reference. As described on the first page of this translation, Lehmann generally describes a sieve bed system with sieve elements 2 with receptacles 8 that interconnect with plastic profile sections 6. The plastic profile sections extend over the entire length of the long side of the sieve elements 2.

In contrast, the present invention as presently claimed in independent claims 6, 55 and 56 includes further includes mounting pins not taught by Lehmann. In particular, Lehmann does not teach the use of mounting pins, but rather relies on plastic profile sections or strip that extend over the entire length of the sieve elements. These long sections block significant portions of the sieve element surface such that less area is available for sifting than sieve elements configured with the presently claimed mounting pins spaced along a sieve element edge. This use of pins and conservation of sifting area is shown in the present patent application FIG. 3 and described in detail in paragraph [0073] of the present patent application specification. In short, Lehmann does not teach the use of mounting pins as specified in independent claims 6, 55, and 56. Claims 7-8, 10-16, 18, 21, and 23-31 depend from claim 6 and therefore are allowable over Lehmann for the same reasons that claim 6 is allowable.

Therefore, under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), Lehmann fails to teach the present invention as claimed in claims 6-8, 10-16, 18, 21, 23-31 and 55-56 and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 6, 9-10, 12-14, 16, 18, 21, 23-28, 30-31 and 55-56 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Galton et al US 5,049,262 (hereinafter "Galton"). The Galton reference generally describes sifting machines with screen modules 30, 34 and mounting pins 40. The mounting pins 40 have an annular collar 74 with a cross-sectional configuration complementary to the cross-sectional configuration of channel 70 in the screen modules 30, 34. This annular collar 74 is symmetrical across a plane defined by the outer-most edge of the collar and cutting perpendicularly through a central axis of the pin 40. The upper portion of the pin 40 is defined as the head portion 42 and the lower portion is defined as the base portion 44.

In contrast, the present invention as presently claimed in independent claims 6, 55 and 56 does not include an annular collar. Rather, the presently claimed mounting pin has an upper surface generally tapering substantially continuously from the outer edge towards the axis of symmetry. This upper surface forms a second angle that is greater than a first angle formed with the lower surface. In particular, Galton does not teach the use of mounting pins with an upper surface that generally tapers substantially continuously from the outer edge towards the axis of symmetry, but rather includes an extra element of an annular collar extending outward from an upper head portion of the mounting pin. In short, Galton does not teach the use of mounting pins as specified in independent claims 6, 55, and 56. Claims 6, 9-10, 12-14, 16, 18, 21, 23-28, and 30-31 depend from claim 6 and therefore are allowable over Galton for the same reasons that claim 6 is allowable.

Therefore, under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), Galton fails to teach the present invention as claimed in claims 6, 9-10, 12-14, 16, 18, 21, 23-28, 30-31 and 55-56 and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 17, 19-20 and 22 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lehmann in view of what is well known in the art (hereinafter "Official Notice").

Applicant respectfully suggests that the Examiner has failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness for two reasons. First, there is no suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference, or to combine the reference teachings.

Secondly, the cited references, when combined, fail to teach or suggest all the claim limitations. The necessary teaching or suggestion to make the claim combination and the reasonable expectation of success is not both found in the cited references.

Lehmann and Official Notice when considered individually or together in combination, fail to suggest or teach all of the elements of the presently pending claims. Applicant respectfully suggests that neither Lehmann nor Official Notice teach mounting pins as claimed in independent claim 6. For the reasons previously stated above, Lehmann merely teaches the use of plastic profile sections that extend along the length of a sieve element rather than the presently claimed mounting pins. Claims 17, 19-20 and 22 depend from claim 6 and therefore are allowable over the Lehmann and Official Notice for the same reasons that claim 6 is allowable.

Therefore, under 35 USC §103(a) Lehmann and Official Notice fail to teach the present invention as claimed in claims 17, 19-20 and 22 and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Applicant has reviewed the other references cited the by Examiner and determined that they do not teach or suggest the present invention.

**Conclusion**

On the basis of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6 – 31, 55 and 56 are now believed to be in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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